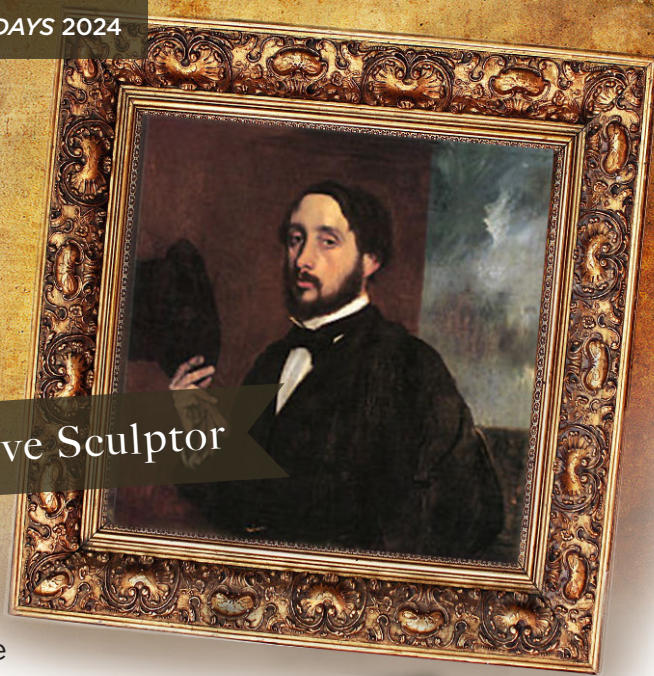


Artists IN FOCUS

Edgar Degas: "Painter of Dancers" & Innovative Sculptor



What We Learned:

- Edgar Degas was born in 1834 in France but in his lifetime, he traveled to Italy and America.
- He went to art school, copied old master painters in the Louvre, and was influenced by other artists of his day.
- Although he is known as one of the founders of Impressionism (visual impression of movement using light and color), he preferred to be called a Realist (artists who painted subjects from everyday life in a naturalistic manner).
- Degas enjoyed painting scenes of everyday life, and he especially enjoyed drawing dancers.
- He created paintings, pastels, drawings, sculpture, and even experimented with photography.
- Although the only sculpture that was ever put on display during his lifetime was *The Little Dancer*, more than 150 sculptures made of clay and wax were found in his studio after his death—many of those were eventually produced in bronze, but in limited quantity.

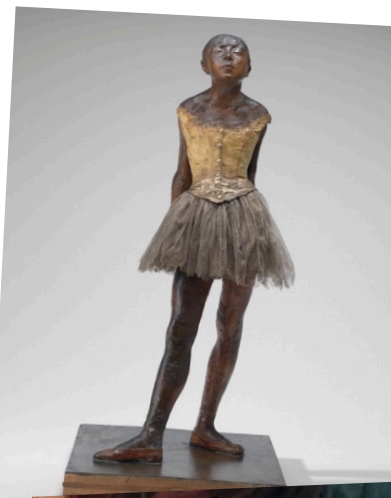


Art Activity: 3D Foil Sculptures

Degas was known as a painter, but he also worked with other art media including sculpture. A sculpture is a 3D art form often made of stone, clay, wood, or metal. Degas' *The Little Dancer* started with a framework of pipe and wood wrapped in rope to make a skeleton. It was then covered in clay and beeswax.

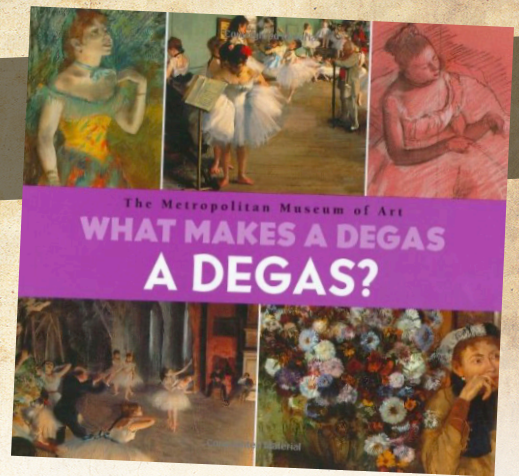
The sculpture was displayed in an 1881 exhibition but was highly criticized and called "simply hideous." It was returned to his studio and never left again during his lifetime. His heirs discovered this sculpture along with many others after his death. The family had them cast into bronze statues. For a more complete discussion about *The Little Dancer*, go to <https://www.nga.gov/stories/edgar-degas-one-little-dancer.html>.

The students made their own 3D sculptures using foil. They formed the basic human shape then added their own personalities to finish their figures.



Book Nook

What Makes a Degas a Degas?
By Richard Mühlberger



For Parents

Edgar Degas (1834 -1917) was born in France. He studied drawing in Paris and Italy. Degas was an Impressionist artist famous for his pastel drawings and oil paintings. He also produced sculptures, prints, and photos. Degas is especially identified with the subject of ballet dancers. The only sculpture he displayed during his lifetime was *The Little Dancer*, which is considered revolutionary in its realism. He along with other French artists started the Impressionist movement in art. Their focus was on light, color, texture, and everyday life. The paintings appeared like “impressions” of a scene or subject. Degas lived alone and never married. As a young man he began having eye problems and by the end of his life he was almost blind. He died at age 83, and his tombstone reads, “He loved drawing very much.”

Please note: As M&G's host location for *Homeschool Days*, Mack Library will feature books each month for parents to reference as resources. We hope these additional features will further support your teaching at home.

Connections at Home: How to Draw a Ballerina

Degas enjoyed painting dancers because of their grace and movement. Using colored pencils, chalk, pastels, or markers draw a ballerina step by step following the picture examples. See if you can capture the dancer's movement like Degas.

CRAFT SUPPLIES:

- Drawing paper
- Colored pencils, chalk, pastels, or markers



Degas Art Project: Depicting Motion

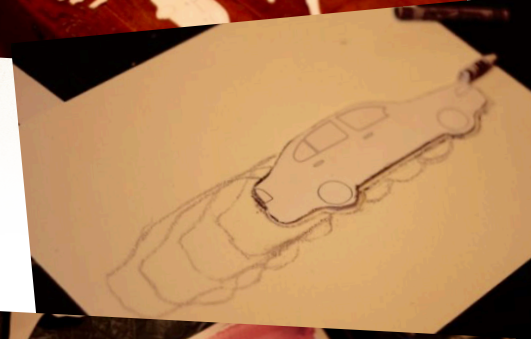
Edgar Degas composed off-center drawings and paintings depicting “real life” situations, and many times he showed a sense of movement using repeated and blurred lines and edges. He is especially known for his paintings of dancers and horses.

CRAFT SUPPLIES:

- Thick paper (for stencil)
- Watercolor paper
- Crayons
- Paintbrush
- Tempera paint
- Water
- Paper towel

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make a stencil. It can be of a dancer, horse, or another object, and it can be drawn freehand or copied.
2. Trace the object repeatedly using a crayon creating a crayon resist. The object will appear to be moving by overlapping it.
3. Using a tempera wash (tempera paint watered down), paint over the entire page.
4. You can go back and give detail to the original object in the painting if desired.



Additional Resources

To learn more about Edgar Degas, click on the links below:

- Discover more about Degas' *Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer* sculpture in the MET collection: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/196439>
- Look closely at the detailed work and choices by Degas in his pastel called, *Waiting*: <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/lgURTnSt923DXQ?hl=en>
- For 10 Edgar Degas projects for kids follow this link: <https://artscraftsymom.com/10-enchanted-edgar-degas-art-projects-for-kids/?epik=djOyJnU9dkhNMTE2UmXkWIICOHFfXORNB0VvcnJuV2VMU0h2eEYmcD0wJm49aHk0OGhIM0hWTWMxX3RXciYzNnNGUSZOPUFBQUFBR2JfTFFZ>
- Edgar Degas study resources can be found here: https://tablelifeblog.com/degas-unit-study/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=pinterest&utm_campaign=tailwind_tribes&utm_content=tribes&utm_term=1213018152_61480376_440068
- View a children's video about the life of Degas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzL1nOXZI-I>
- Read Edgar Degas' Biography for Kids: <https://jusclassical.com/edgar-degas-biography-for-kids/>
- Kiddle Facts of Edgar Degas: https://kids.kiddle.co/Edgar_Degas

Due to the changing nature of web resources, M&G strongly urges you as the parent to preview these sites before your child accesses them. The fact that these sites are available on this handout does not imply that M&G endorses their content from the standpoint of morals, philosophy, theology, or scientific hypotheses.

M&G Educational Mission:

Through tours, events, and publications, the Museum & Gallery seeks to partner with educators in fulfilling all of the National Visual Arts Content Standards. By integrating art into the core curriculum, M&G's goals are to teach children to value the arts, to communicate through the arts, to become creative problem solvers through the inclusion of STEAM-related concepts and fully-developed STEAM units, to understand history and culture in light of the arts, to improve literary interest and understanding through visual storytelling, to critique the arts, and to develop an aesthetic awareness of the arts. Through fulfilling the mission, M&G is able to help develop citizens who have the ability to think, feel, and understand the world in which they live.

